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Months of neglect

A playground in Taman Sri Lempah off Jalan Kelang Lama is among many public recreational facilities under the purview of Kuala Lumpur City Hall that urgently needs sprucing up. >See report on page 2.

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KL folk want playgrounds and facilities cleaned up

Residents say neighbourhood parks neglected, unsafe for children

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WITH facilities like the zoo, theme parks and entertainment centres still closed until Oct 1 under Phase Two of the National Recovery Plan (NRP), Kuala Lumpur residents want the authorities to clean up some of the city's playgrounds and parks for their children to play in a safe environment.

At some of the neighbourhood playgrounds in Cheras, Jalan Kelang Lama, Brickfields and Lembah Pantai, the grass has not been cut for months and shrubs and other vegetation have taken over the field.

The area has also become very dirty.

"My son has been cooped up indoors for a long time and I would like him to go out and play," said R. Moses from Cheras.

"There are many children here.

"I would like to see them play football or basketball at our neighbourhood playground, but the place is unkempt.

"And since I cannot take him to the zoo yet or to other similar spots, I would like to see him enjoy some sports or get some exercise and fresh air," he added.

The government announced recently that from Sept 17, sports and recreational activities that involved physical contact are allowed at indoor and outdoor facilities for states under Phase Two and Phase Three.

Kuala Lumpur, Selangor and Putrajaya are now in Phase Two of the NRP.

Last week, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said various tourism attractions were also allowed to reopen to customers and operators who have been fully vaccinated beginning Oct 1.

Tourist sites such as zoos, aquariums, scuba diving activities and ecoparks will be allowed to operate.

The facilities are only open to fully vaccinated individuals but are subject to booking, sanitisation and close monitoring of the facilities.

Team sports and recreational activities that involve physical contact such as football, volleyball and



Residents want DBKL to clear away the undergrowth at the open space near the former DBKL sports club land for children to play football there.



The spectators bench at Brickfields' Cruyff Court is falling apart.

takraw are permitted for those who have been fully vaccinated.

Group physical activities such as aerobics and Zumba can be conducted at 50% capacity or no more than 50 fully vaccinated participants.

Since the announcement, Kuala Lumpur folk have been eager to get some exercise at their neighbourhood fields and playgrounds.

But sadly, many such open spaces are in bad shape.

At some of them, the grass has not been cut for months and water has stagnated in many spots, no thanks to heavy rains.

These underutilised parks have become mosquito-breeding grounds too.

In Taman Sri Lempah near Lorong Jugra off Jalan Kelang Lama, the park under the purview of Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) looked like a mini jungle.

It is obvious that it has not been maintained for some time.

"I would like my children to run around the park in the evenings, but until the grass is cut and the place is cleaned up, I won't be sending them there," said resident Raj Krishnan.

Over in Brickfields, members of

the community have started playing football on the abandoned Cruyff Court located on the former land of the DBKL sports club.

Every evening, since the federal capital moved into Phase Two, residents have been playing football at the court despite it being in a shabby state.

The court was closed on March 31, 2017 to make way for a planned development on the parcel of land.

The facilities were boarded up, and soon became overrun with shrubs overrunning the area.

Cruyff Court belongs to the Hasanah Foundation but that has not stopped football lovers from making use of it.

"DBKL and Hasanah Foundation should make some effort to clean up the area and allow the community to use it," said Brickfields Rukun Tetangga (RT) chairman SKK Naidu.

"The facility is already there, so why not make the most of it?"

"I am very disappointed with the authorities for putting people's interest second," he added.

Local Agenda 21 (LA21) secretariat and coordinator A. Ghani Mohamed said after being cooped up indoors for months, people were craving for exercise and fresh air.

"Allow them to utilise the city facilities instead of keeping these under lock and key," he said.

Ghani, who has been vocal about Cruyff Court in Brickfields, appealed to Hasanah Foundation to retain the court there and clean it up.

StarMetro had earlier reported that Hasanah Foundation had decided to relocate the court to Kampung Baru.

However, many community leaders voiced their unhappiness over the decision since Brickfields has no proper place for residents to play football in.

Plans by DBKL to build a football field on its former sports club land are still in the pipeline.

Residents also urged Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Seri Mahadi Che Ngah to get the area around the Cruyff Court cleaned up so that residents and the B40 income group can continue using it.